May 2013 Climate Summary for Southwest Lower Michigan

Evan Webb
National Weather Service Grand Rapids, MI

Overview

After three consecutive months of well below normal temperatures, May 2013 saw well above normal temperatures return to Southwest Lower Michigan (Table 1). Precipitation was near or slightly above normal in May.

The May average temperature was around 4 degrees above normal across West Michigan (Figure 2), bringing some much welcomed warmth. We started out very warm, with the first nine days of the month seeing well above normal temperatures. A stout cold front swept through, and temperatures were much cooler than normal for a four-day period. The warm air was then able to return, however, and temperatures were above normal for another nine days before cold air infiltrated the region just a couple days prior to Memorial Day weekend. That cool air was also short-lived, and the last few days of the month were quite warm and muggy with thunderstorms impacting the region.

Precipitation was above normal for most locations during May in West Michigan (Figure 4), especially north of I-96. The first week of May was almost entirely dry, providing relief for the record flooding recovery process after torrential rainfall in April. The final flood advisory from the record flooding event was cancelled on the 7th of May. There were a few days of measurable rainfall during the second week of May before conditions dried out again. A chunk of the monthly precipitation occurred from May 20-23, with many locations receiving between 1-3 inches of rainfall. The month concluded in a quite moist, stormy weather pattern with most locations receiving significant rainfall from May 27-31.

The severe weather season finally started up during May across the area. General thunderstorms on May 10-11 produced some non-severe wind gusts and pea size hail. Thunderstorms that rolled through on May 20th downed trees and power lines and produced ½" to 1" hail. Additional rounds of strong to severe storms impacted Southwest Lower Michigan during the final week of the month. A severe thunderstorm produced EF-0 wind damage at MPC Cashway Lumberyard about 6 miles WNW of Lansing in Clinton County. A semi-truck was also rolled over at the site. Penny to nickel-size hail fell on the 30th. Also on the 30th, there were several strong wind gusts with some associated tree damage. The most significant damage was done to two relatively new barns in Clinton County. Winds were estimated at 70 mph by local emergency management.

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Table 1. Reported temperature, precipitation and snowfall amounts for May 2013 at primary climate stations in Southwest Lower Michigan.

Location		Average Temperature (° F)	Precipitation (inches)	Snowfall (inches)
Grand Rapids	Observed	62.5°	3.59 in	T
	Normal	58.7°	3.98 in	0.0 in
	Above/Below Normal	**+ 3.8°**	**- 0.39 in**	0.0 in
Lansing	Observed	61.6°	3.95 in	0.0 in
	Normal	57.7°	3.36 in	0.0 in
	Above/Below Normal	**+ 3.9°**	**+ 0.59 in**	0.0 in
Muskegon	Observed	60.6°	4.53 in	0.0 in
	Normal	56.9°	3.25 in	0.0 in
	Above/Below Normal	**+ 3.7°**	**+ 1.28 in**	0.0 in

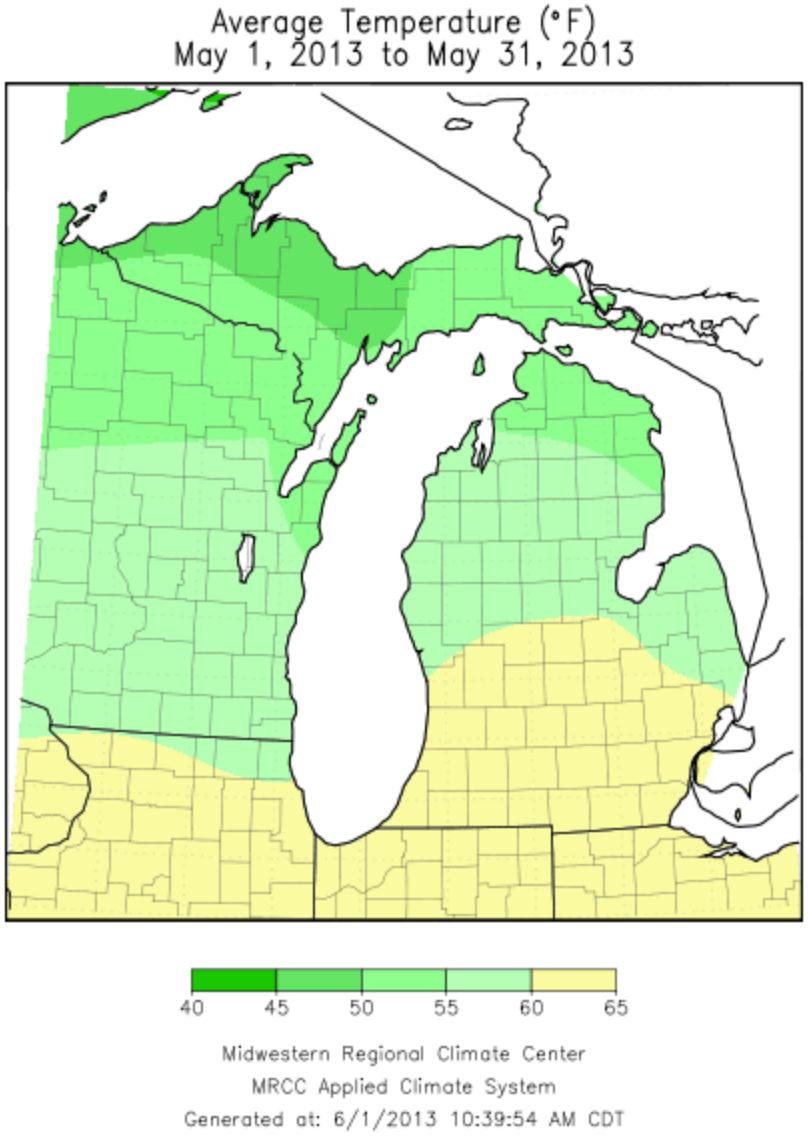

Figure 1. Average temperature (°F) for May 2013.

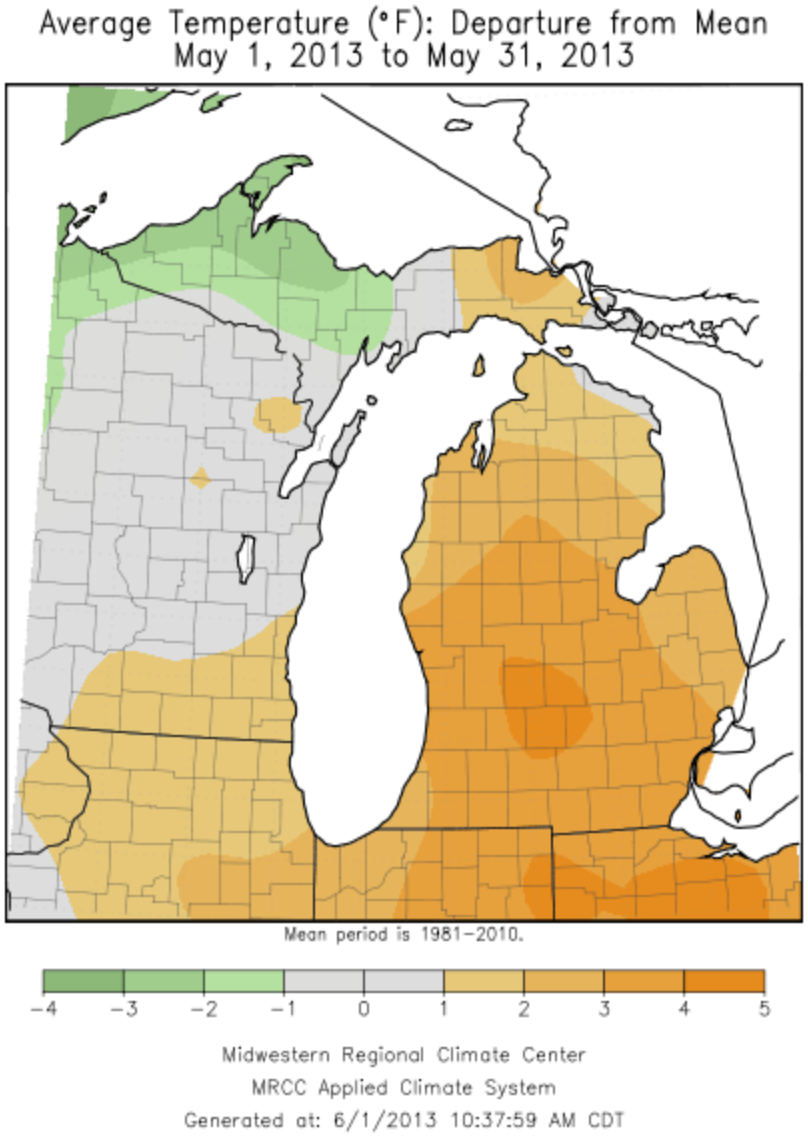

Figure 2. Average temperature departure (°F) for May 2013.

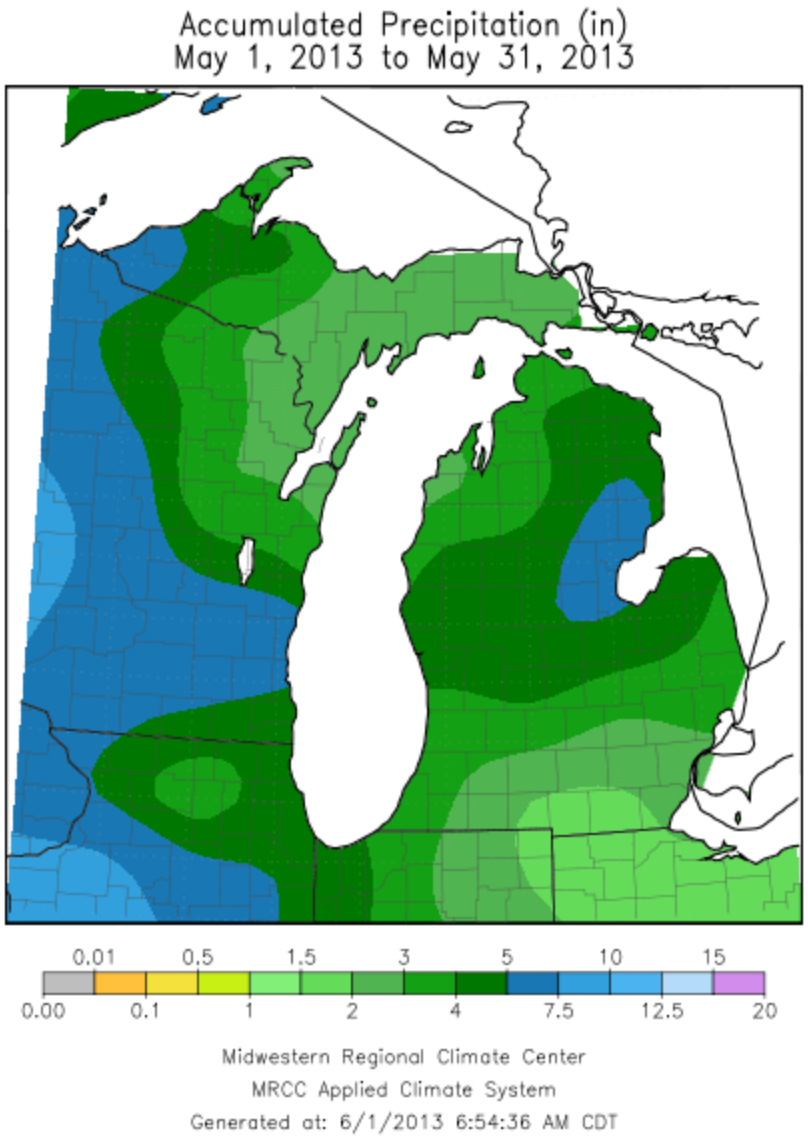

Figure 3. Total precipitation (in inches) for May 2013.

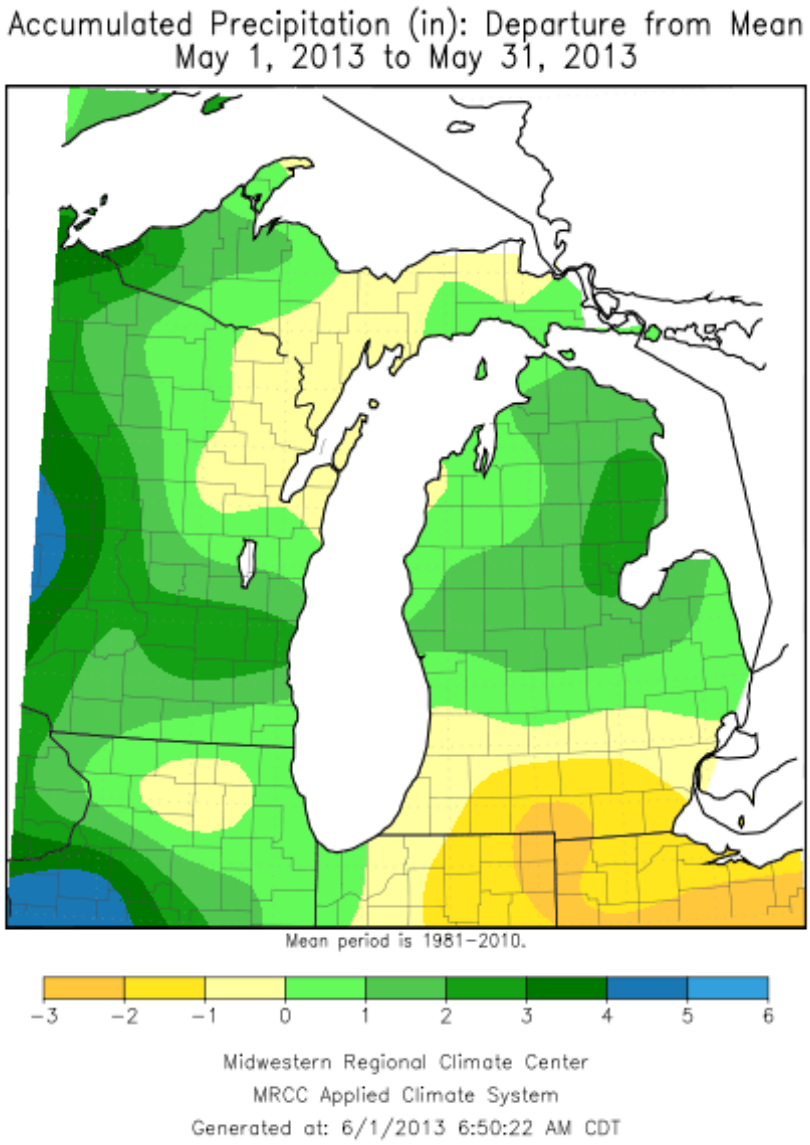

Figure 4. Average precipitation departure (in inches) for May 2013.